

## Golden Rice could illegally make its way to India as country struggles to stay 'GMO free'

India has traditionally been a 'no-GMO' country, a status recently reinforced when the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) announced a long list of 24 foods that would need to be accompanied with mandatory 'No-GM' or 'GM-Free' certificates starting from January 2021.

This comprehensive list includes many common items, including the top four global crops maize, wheat, rice and soybean.

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[Food commodities expert Samarendu] Mohanty opined that GMO technology may not be kept at bay for too long, especially with Golden Rice set to [appear on the market in Bangladesh](#) soon.

"Bangladesh policies are extremely progressive and scientific even though it is a Least Developed Country (LDC), and it will be very interesting to see what happens when Golden Rice enters the market," he said.

"It obviously neighbours India, and if this is profitable, then there is no doubt it is going to make its way across the border to enter India – then what will you (the government) do? How to maintain control?"

Mohanty's query has some validity as back in 2009, a form of GM eggplant called Bt brinjal was initially approved but suddenly put on a moratorium in 2010, catching the sector by surprise.

The Indian government has not lifted the moratorium to date, but the result of this was that Bt brinjal seeds or saplings are still circulating in the Indian market today, though deemed illegal.

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